



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

FEB 17 2009

OFFICE OF  
ENFORCEMENT AND  
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

NAVFAC Atlantic  
Attention: Code EV22TW (GOMEX EIS/OEIS PM)  
6506 Hampton Boulevard  
Norfolk, VA 23508-1278

Dear Sir/Madam:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the U.S. Navy's draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for the Gulf of Mexico Range Complex (CEQ# 20080539).

The Gulf of Mexico (GOMEX) Range Complex is a combination of sea and airspace where Navy and Marine Corps training is conducted. The EIS/OEIS assessed the potential environmental impacts associated with the Navy Fleet and Chief of Naval Education training, Navy research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E) activities, and associated range capabilities enhancements. The Navy's preferred alternative is Alternative 2, which eliminates Mine Warfare training; increases or modifies training and RDT&E operations from current levels; implements Joint National Capability (JNTC) within the GOMEX Range Complex; uses commercial air services range training enhancement; and eliminates the use of High Explosive (HE) bombs during major exercise air-to-surface bombing events. Non-explosive Practice Munition (NEPM) bombs will continue to be used during major exercises.

EPA believes that this draft EIS/OEIS provides an adequate discussion of the potential environmental impacts. Moreover, the draft EIS/OEIS does not identify any significant environmental effects that will result in this action. Therefore, EPA has no environmental concerns about the preferred alternative and has rated it as LO – "Lack of Objections".

We appreciate the opportunity to review this draft EIS/OEIS, and look forward to reviewing the final EIS/OEIS related to this project. The staff contact for the review is Candi Schaedle and she can be reached at (202) 564-6121.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Susan E. Bromm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Susan E. Bromm  
Director  
Office of Federal Activities